

Building Bridges session – High School of Jewish Studies - 11/4/09

## Curiosity and Leadership

“People follow a true leader just out of curiosity about where they’re going...”

Lack of curiosity is a breeding ground for stereotyping and discrimination, inflated confidence, ignorance that can actually lead to poor decision-making, dogmatism and rigidity of thought.

Todd Kashdan (2009)



Answers don't change the world. Questions do. Learn to ask WHY.

## A LITANY ON THE WORK OF LEADERSHIP

Leader: Curiosity and the urge to solve problems are the hallmarks of our species (Carl Sagan).

**People: IGNORANCE IS AN ENEMY OF LEADERSHIP.**

Leader: If we take people as they are, we make them worse. If we treat them as if they were what they ought to be, we help them become what they are capable of becoming (Goethe).

**People: PREJUDICE IS AN ENEMY OF LEADERSHIP.**

Leader: We are producing the most educated, articulate, and brilliant sidewalk superintendents the world has ever seen. We have a limitless supply of people with intelligence and expertise to analyze society's problems, but very, very few with the motivation and stamina to leap in and help solve them (John Gardner).

**People: APATHY IS AN ENEMY OF LEADERSHIP.**

Leader: And in any society those who choose the most have the most reason to feel free (Harland Cleveland).

**People: INDECISION IS AN ENEMY OF LEADERSHIP.**

Leader: In measuring things that can be counted or expressed in quantifiable terms, we are led unawares to the grand illusion - that only the measurable really matters (Harold Enarson). I have this private theory that public-sector executives too often are timid philosophers, that the only performance indicator they are comfortable with is growth (Grady Bogue).

**People: MEDIOCRITY IS AN ENEMY OF LEADERSHIP.**

Leader: The exercise of leadership requires a strong sense of personal identity - knowing who one is and who one is not (Abraham Zalegnik). We cannot make meanings for others until we have first found meaning for ourselves (Bogue).

**People: IMITATION IS AN ENEMY OF LEADERSHIP.**

Leader: A man who becomes conscious of the responsibility he bears toward a human being who affectionately awaits him, or to an unfinished work, will never be able to throw away his life. He knows the "why" for his existence, and will be able to bear almost any "how" (Victor Frankl).

**People: ARROGANCE IS AN ENEMY OF LEADERSHIP.**

## Creativity and Leadership

What is Creativity?

from <http://www.creativityatwork.com/articlesContent/whatis.htm>

I define creativity as the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity involves two processes: thinking, then producing. Innovation is the production or implementation of an idea. If you have ideas, but don't act on them, you are imaginative but not creative.

For innovation to flourish, organizations must create an environment that fosters creativity; bringing together multi-talented groups of people who work in close collaboration together— exchanging knowledge, ideas and shaping the direction of the future.

— Linda Naiman

“Creativity is the process of bringing something new into being... creativity requires passion and commitment. Out of the creative act is born symbols and myths. It brings to our awareness what was previously hidden and points to new life. The experience is one of heightened consciousness—ecstasy.”

— Rollo May, *The Courage to Create*

The nature of innovation—the inherent definition of innovation—has changed today from what it was in the past. It's no longer individuals toiling in a laboratory, coming up with some great invention. It's not an individual. It's individuals. It's multidisciplinary. It's global. It's collaborative.

—Sam Palmisano, Chairman, President and CEO, IBM

Rules of the garage:

Believe you can change the world.

Work quickly, keep the tools unlocked, work whenever.

Know when to work alone and when to work together.

Share — tools, ideas. Trust your colleagues.

No politics. No bureaucracy. (These are ridiculous in a garage.)

The customer defines a job well done.

Radical ideas are not bad ideas.

Invent different ways of working.

Make a contribution every day. If it doesn't contribute, it doesn't leave the garage.

Believe that together we can do anything.

Invent.

—1999 HP Annual Report